

# **DRAFT**

# **Woodson K. Woods Memorial Conservation Area**

**Ten Year Area Management Plan**  
**FY 2015-2025**



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<http://mdc.mo.gov/node/19221?ap=7103>

## OVERVIEW

- **Official Area Name:** Woodson K. Woods Memorial Conservation Area, # 7103
- **Year of Initial Acquisition:** 1971
- **Acreage:** 5,661 acres
- **County:** Phelps and Crawford
- **Division with Administrative Responsibility:** Forestry
- **Division with Maintenance Responsibility:** Forestry
- **Statements of Purpose:**
  - A. Strategic Direction**

Manage for healthy forests and wildlife, the restoration of natural landscapes and public recreational opportunities.
  - B. Desired Future Condition**

The desired future condition of Woodson K. Woods Memorial Conservation Area (CA) is a woodland/forest landscape along the Meramec River and Dry Fork Creek.
  - C. Federal Aid Statement**

This area, or a portion thereof, was acquired (or developed) with Land and Water Conservation Fund dollars to provide land or facilities for public outdoor recreation.

## GENERAL INFORMATION AND CONDITIONS

### I. Special Considerations

- A. Priority Areas:** Woodson K. Woods Memorial Conservation Area is within or contains parts of the Dry Fork Priority Watershed, Woodson K. Woods Wildlife Priority Area, Priority Forest Landscape and the Dry Fork Upper Meramec Aquatic Conservation Opportunity Area.

**Natural Area:** Woodson K. Woods Memorial Conservation Area contains the entirety of the 417-acre Spring's End Forest Natural Area.

### II. Important Natural Features and Resources

- A. Species of Conservation Concern:** Species of conservation concern are known from this area. Area Managers should consult the Natural Heritage Database annually and review all management activities with the Natural History Biologist.
- B. Caves:** None
- C. Springs:** Yes, records kept with the Department Natural History Biologist.

### III. Existing Infrastructure

- 10 parking lots (Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible, 1 gravel lot with a concrete pad)
- 32.25 miles of access roads and trails
- 1 privy (ADA accessible)
- 9 structures (1 cabin, 1 workshop, 5 equipment storage buildings, 1 chemical storage building, and 1 sign and seed storage building)
- 1 boat ramp (gravel access to Meramec River)
- 24 fishless ponds
- 5 small gravel pit ponds joining river (open to fishing)

### IV. Area Restrictions or Limitations

- A. Deed Restrictions or Ownership Considerations:** The initial donation from the Woods Foundation carried a request for the area to “Not be used as a high density public use, but rather that the public use the land as a hike-in area.”
- B. Federal Interest:** This land must provide land/facilities for public outdoor recreation in perpetuity. Federal funds may be used in the management of this land. Fish and wildlife agencies may not allow recreational activities and related facilities that would interfere with the purpose for which the State is managing the land. Other uses may be acceptable and must be assessed in each specific situation.
- C. Easements:** Union Electric has a 100-foot wide easement, approximately 4.4 miles long, totaling 53 acres; the easement includes small feeder lines and access for maintenance. The Gulf Central Pipeline Company has a 30-foot wide easement, approximately 1.5 miles long. An adjacent landowner has a road easement to his property.
- D. Cultural Resources Findings:** Yes, records kept with the Department Environmental Compliance Specialist. Managers should follow Best Management Practices for Cultural Resources found in the Department Resource Policy Manual.
- E. Hazards and Hazardous Materials:** None observed.
- F. Endangered Species:** Endangered Species are known from this area. Area Managers should consult the Natural Heritage Database annually and review all management activities with the Natural History Biologist.
- G. Boundary Issues:** None

## MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

### V. Terrestrial Resource Management Considerations

Management will be focused on maintaining healthy natural communities for wildlife habitat according to 10-year inventories completed on each of the seven compartments.

#### **Challenges and Opportunities:**

- 1) Manage forest and woodland communities.
- 2) Maintain healthy and diverse habitats on open ground.
- 3) Maintain 417-acre Spring's End Forest Natural Area.

**Management Objective 1:** Maintain healthy trees and woodlands with management emphasis on wildlife habitat.

**Strategy 1:** Monitor woodlands for invasive exotic vegetation, diseases and insects. Suppress any infestations that may develop. (Forestry)

**Strategy 2:** Implement recommendations and practices as recommended in the compartment inventories. (Forestry)

**Management Objective 2:** Maintain open land management program to sustain healthy habitats and sustain wildlife food sources.

**Strategy 1:** Monitor open land for invasive exotic species. Suppress any infestations that may develop. (Forestry)

**Strategy 2:** Maintain habitat diversity as directed in compartment inventories. (Forestry)

**Strategy 3:** Maintain crop ground by planting, as needed and utilizing crop contracts. (Forestry)

**Management Objective 3:** Protect, maintain and improve Spring's End Forest Natural Area.

**Strategy 1:** Monitor natural area for invasive vegetation and animals, diseases and insects. Suppress or control any infestations that may develop. (Forestry)

**Strategy 2:** Implement prescriptions based on inventories developed for the compartments that contain elements of the natural area. (Forestry)

**Strategy 3:** Maintain existing species and habitats within the natural area. (Forestry)

## **VI. Aquatic Resource Management Considerations**

Woodson K. Woods Memorial CA contains portions of the Meramec River, Dry Fork Creek and their tributaries; former gravel-mining pits (in the Meramec River floodplain); springs; and other small impoundments. The confluence of the major spring arising on adjacent property with the Meramec River provides a unique diversity of cold, cool and warm-water aquatic habitats.

### **Challenges and Opportunities:**

- 1) Manage the sport fishery in the Meramec River and Dry Fork Creek.
- 2) Manage riparian and buffer areas around streams, springs and small impoundments.

**Management Objective 1:** Manage stream fisheries for high-quality sport fishing.

**Strategy 1:** Maintain several year classes of brown trout through annual stockings. Number stocked will be determined by the trout stocking matrix, and based on the number available from the cold-water hatchery system. (Fisheries)

**Strategy 2:** Assess sport fish population status on a two-year interval. (Fisheries)

**Management Objective 2:** Manage the aquatic habitats and adjacent riparian or buffer areas to maintain or improve aquatic ecological functions for aquatic species of concern.

**Strategy 1:** Maintain or improve terrestrial natural communities. (Forestry)

## **VII. Public Use Management Considerations**

### **Challenges and Opportunities:**

- 1) Provide hunting and viewing opportunities.
- 2) Provide river access opportunities.
- 3) Build relationships with neighboring landowners.

**Management Objective 1:** Provide public hunting and viewing opportunities.

**Strategy 1:** Conduct annual management activities that will provide habitat for a diversity of species. (Forestry)

**Strategy 2:** Conduct annual management activities that will provide hike-in opportunities. (Forestry)

**Management Objective 2:** Provide river access opportunities.

**Strategy 1:** Maintain boat ramp at Missouri Highway 8 access. (Forestry, Design and Development)

**Strategy 2:** Maintain infrastructure and trails at walk-in access points on Dry Fork River and Meramec River, along Besmer Road. (Forestry)

**Strategy 3:** Maintain safe area around river access points by assessing and removing possible hazards. (Forestry)

**Management Objective 3:** Facilitate a good working relationship with neighboring landowners.

**Strategy 1:** Work with neighbors to minimize any boundary, trespass or any other issues affecting Woodson K. Woods Memorial CA or private property. (Forestry)

**Strategy 2:** Promote habitat management on neighboring landowner's properties. (Private Land Services, Forestry)

## VIII. Administrative Considerations

### **Challenges and Opportunities:**

- 1) Maintain area infrastructure at current levels.
- 2) Improve existing structures.
- 3) Acquisition of land.

**Management Objective 1:** Maintain area infrastructure at current levels.

**Strategy 1:** Maintain area infrastructure in accordance with Department guidelines and at currently identified maintenance level (1). (Forestry, and Design and Development)

**Management Objective 2:** Improve existing structures (cabin, workshop, equipment storage buildings, chemical storage building, and sign and seed storage building).

**Strategy 1:** Improve existing structures to improve energy efficiency, reduce maintenance and increase structure longevity. (Design and Development)

**Strategy 2:** Improve existing structures to make them useful for new purposes and increase current usage. (Forestry, Design and Development)

### **Lands Proposed for Acquisition:**

When available, adjacent land may be considered for acquisition from willing sellers. Tracts that improve area access, provide public use opportunities, contain unique natural communities and/or species of conservation concern, or meet other Department priorities, as identified in the annual Department land acquisition priorities, may be considered. (Forestry)

## MANAGEMENT TIMETABLE

Strategies are considered ongoing unless listed in the following table:

	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
<b>Terrestrial Resource Management</b>										
Objective 1										
Strategy 2*		X		X		X			X	
<b>Aquatic Resource Management</b>										
Objective 1										
Strategy 2		X		X		X		X		X

\*Woodson K. Woods Compartment Forest Inventory Schedule

Compartment 1: 2016

Compartment 2: 2018

Compartment 3: 2025

Compartment 4: 2023

Compartment 5: 2020

Compartment 6: 2018

Compartment 7: 2018

## APPENDICES

### Area Background:

Woodson K. Woods Memorial Conservation Area is 5,661 acres in size, along the Meramec River in Crawford and Phelps counties, approximately 3 miles east of St. James on Missouri Highway 8. The James Foundation owns Meramec Spring Park, which divides the area. The Woodson K. Woods Memorial CA is in the Ozark Border section.

The initial 5,300 acres were purchased in December 1971 with funds donated by the James H. Woods Foundation, the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation and Department funds. The acquisition enabled the Department to manage 4.5 miles of the Meramec River for a trout fishery, along with a portion of the Dry Fork River for warm-water fisheries. The purchase also offered an opportunity to partner in resource management activities on the adjoining 1,756 acres of land owned by the James Foundation.

The 280-acre Gray Tract was added in February 1979 to extend the ownership across the Dry Fork and provide access from the county road, while increasing fishing opportunities for the public. Two additional 40-acre tracts were purchased in 1992 to reduce inholdings.

### Current Land and Water Types:

Land/Water Type	Acres	Miles	% of Area
Forest and Woodland	4,670		82.5
Old Field	325		5.7
Crop Land	300		5.3
Grassland	150		2.6
Riparian Wetland	100		1.8
Glade	60		1.1
Savanna	40		0.7
Lakes/Ponds	16		0.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,661</b>		<b>100</b>
Permanent Stream Frontage		7	

### Maps:

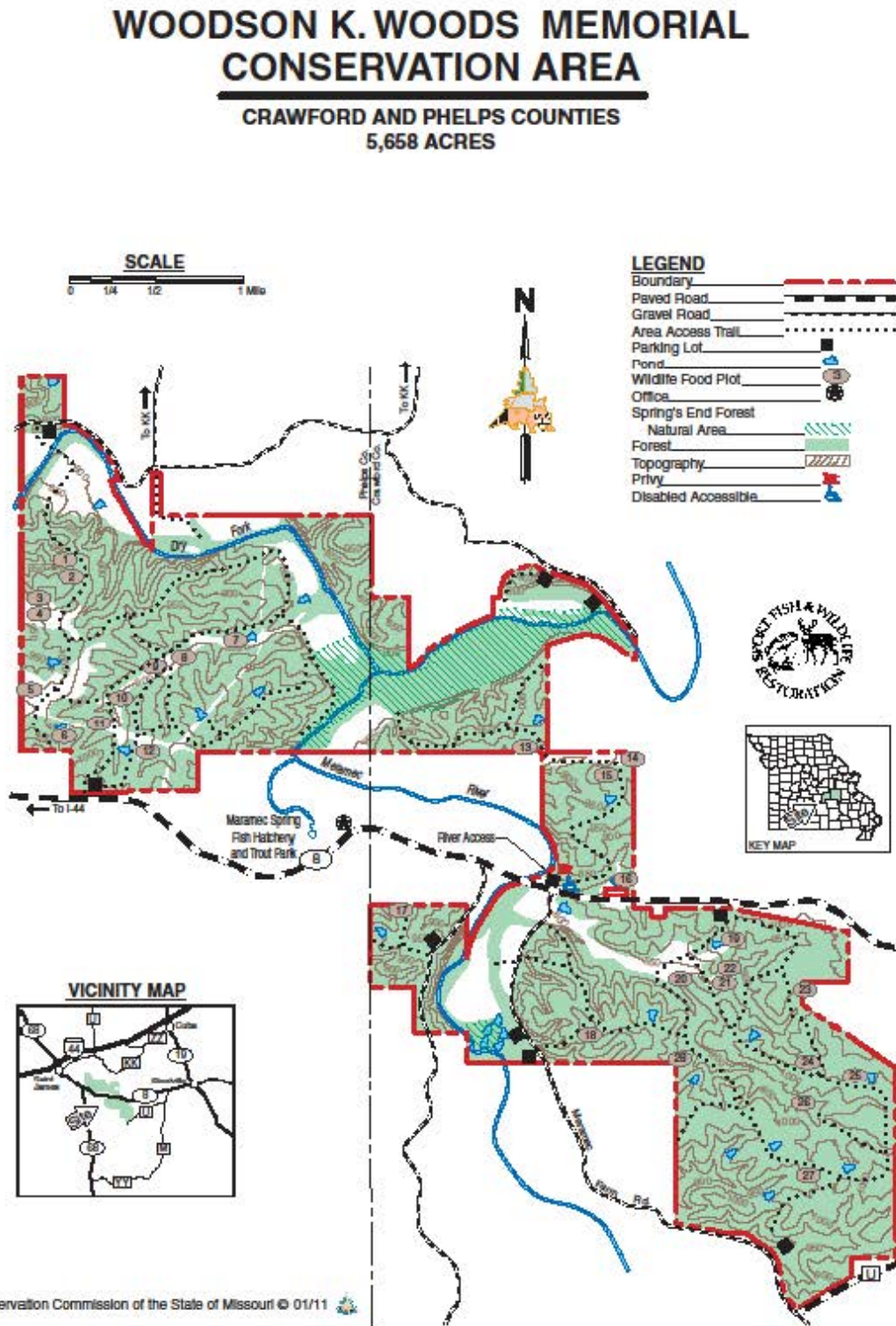
Figure 1: Area Map

Figure 2: Aerial Map

Figure 3: Topographic Map



Figure 1: Area Map



**Figure 2: Aerial Map**

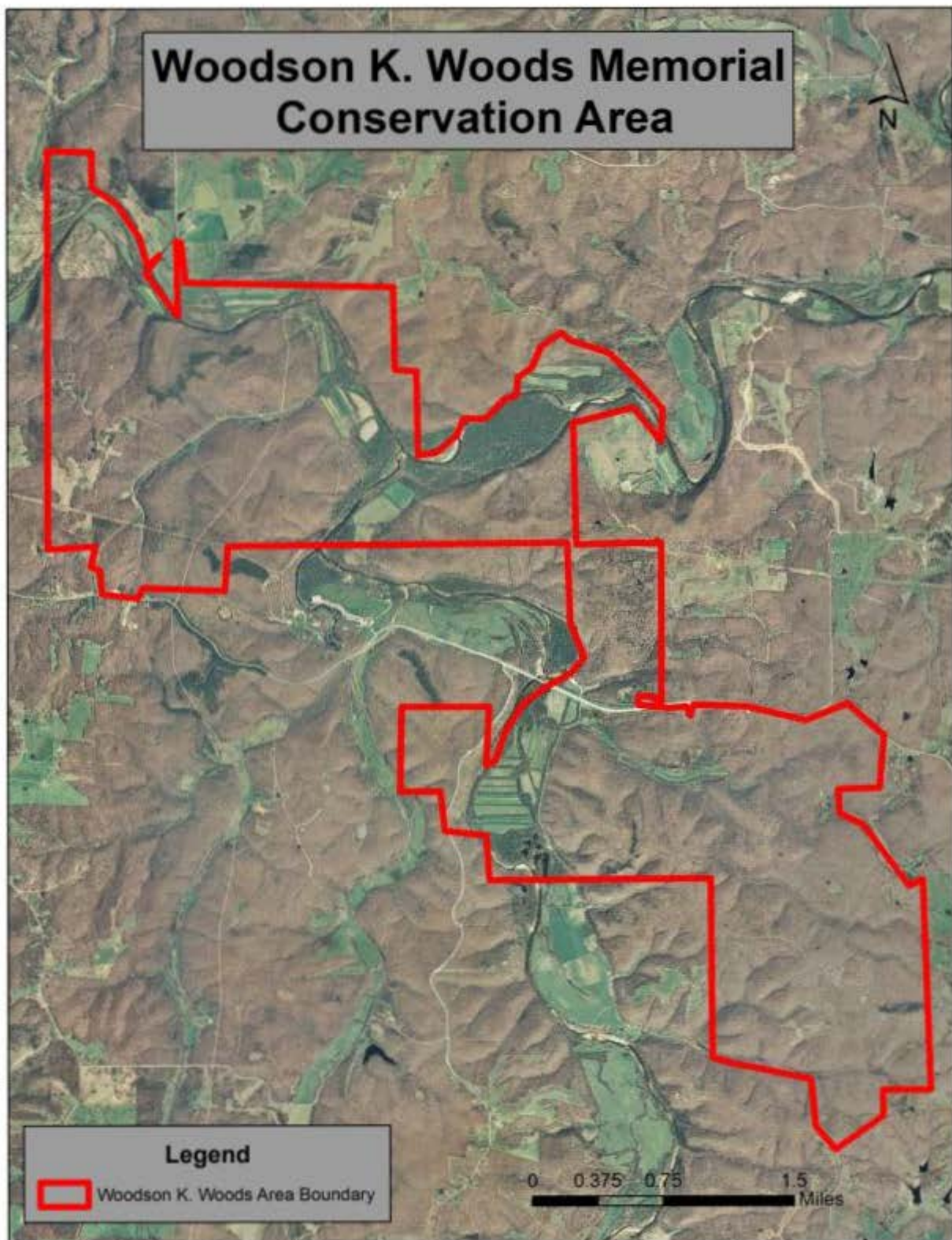
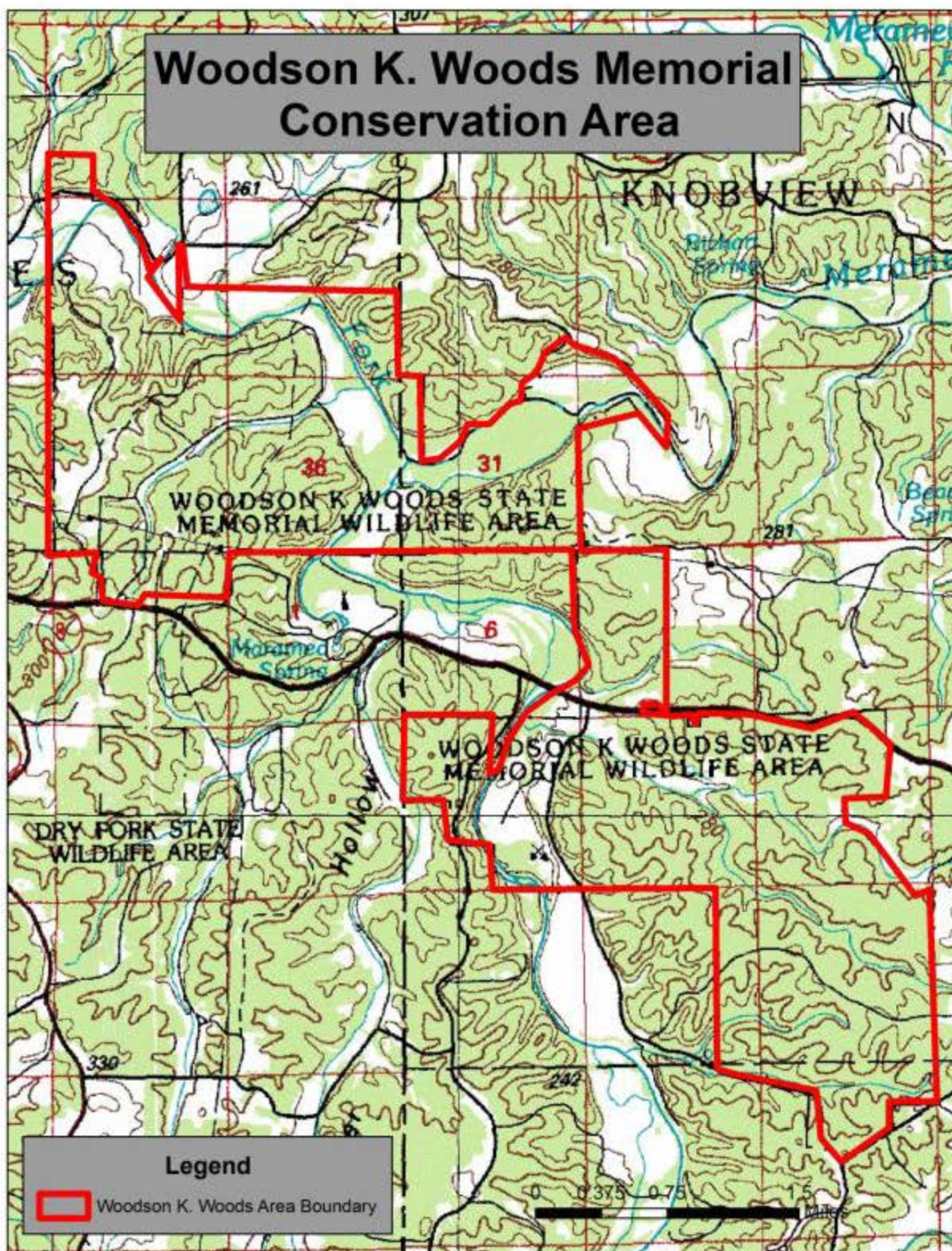




Figure 3: Topographic Map



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